

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 LISBON 08451 081001Z

21

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 INR-07 LAB-04  
NSAE-00 SIL-01 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 L-03 NSC-05 PA-01  
PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 ACDA-07 SAJ-01 TRSE-00  
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R 071813Z DEC 76

FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9455

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMCONSUL OPORTO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION GENEVA

USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 8451

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ELAB, PINT, PO

SUBJ: LABOR DEVELOPMENTS

REF: LISBON 8290

SUMMARY: A SOCIALIST-SPONSORED MEETING OF CONSTRUCTION WORKERS  
HAS PROVOKED PROTESTS AGAINST "INTERNATIONAL INTERVENTION" BY  
INTERSINDICAL. THE SOCIALIST PLAN TO END AUTOMATIC CHECK-OFF  
OF UNION DUES MAY BACKFIRE. "OPEN LETTER" UNIONS HAVE  
CHALLENGED ALL UNIONS TO HOLD REFERENDA ON WHETHER TO  
PARTICIPATE IN THE NATIONAL LABOR CONGRESS. THERE IS SMALL  
PROSPECT OF SUCH REFERENDA BEING HELD. END SUMMARY

1. SOCIALIST CONSTRUCTION WORKERS MEET: SOME 200  
SOCIALIST CONSTRUCTION WORKERS MET IN THE TOWN OF ALCOBACA  
DEC 4-5. THE MEETING WAS CONVOKED BY PS LABOR ADVISOR  
PELAGIO MADUREIRA TO ANALYZE TRADE UNIONS AND POLITICAL  
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PAGE 02 LISBON 08451 081001Z

DEVELOPMENTS. JOHN LOFBLAD, SOECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF BUILDING AND WOODWORKERS (IFBWW) WAS PRESENT AND COMPLIMENTED THE PS WORKERS ON THEIR EFFORTS TO FORM FREE AND DEMOCRATIC UNIONS. SECRETARY OF STATE FOR LABOR MALDONADO GONELHA ATTACKED INTERSINDICAL FOR DEMAGOGIC AND POLITICALLY INSPIRED LABOR DEMANDS. MALDONADO GONELHA STATED PUBLICLY THAT THE GOVERNMENT'S DECISION TO ELIMINATE THE AUTOMATIC CHECK-OFF OF UNION DUES BY EMPLOYERS WAS DESIGNED TO "BREAK THE BACK OF INTERSINDICAL."

2. "OPEN LETTER" UNIONS PROPOSE REFERENDA: THE "OPEN LETTER" (CARTA ABERTA) UNIONS, IN A PRESS CONFERENCE DEC 2, CHALLENGED ALL UNIONS TO HOLD SECRET BALLOT REFERENDA ON WHETHER THEY SHOULD PARTICIPATE IN THE INTERSINDICAL-SPONSORED NATIONAL LABOR CONGRESS. MOST "OPEN LETTER" UNIONS HAVE ALREADY HELD SUCH REFERENDA, OR ARE PROCEEDING TO DO SO, WITH RESULTS FAVORABLE TO THE DEMOCRATIC LABOR MOVEMENT. THE "OPEN LETTER" CHALLENGE HAS BEEN BELITTLED BY INTERSINDICAL-AFFILIATED UNION LEADERS WHO ARGUE THAT ONLY WORKERS WHO ARE "FULLY INFORMED IN GENERAL ASSEMBLIES" ARE QUALIFIED TO DECIDE SUCH ISSUES.

3. COMMENT: MALDONADO GONELHA MAKES NO SECRET OF HIS OPPOSITION TO INTERSINDICAL. THERE IS DOUBT, HOWEVER, THAT THE GOVERNMENT'S PLAN TO ELIMINATE AUTOMATIC DUES CHECK-OFF WILL STRENGTHEN THE SOCIALISTS' POSITION IN LABOR. PELAGIO MADUREIRA TOLD LABATT NOV 26 THAT ALTHOUGH HE ORIGINALLY APPROVED MALDONADO'S PROPOSAL, HE NOW OPPOSES IT ON TWO GROUNDS:

-- SOCIALIST UNIONS ARE DEPENDENT UPON DUES CHECK-OFF FOR FINANCIAL SUPPORT, BUT COMMUNIST-LED UNIONS CAN OBTAIN ALTERNATIVE SOURCES OF FINANCING;  
-- ENDING DUES CHECK-OFF IS OPPOSED EQUALLY BY DEMOCRATIC UNIONS AS WELL AS BY INTERSINDICAL AND TENDS TO PUSH ALL UNIONS TOGETHER IN OPPOSITION TO THE GOVERNMENT ON A LEGITIMATE LABOR ISSUE.

MADUREIRA SAID HE INTENDED TO PERSUADE SOARES TO RECONSIDER THE MATTER BEFORE THE PENDING DECREE LAW IS PROMULGATED.

4. THE PRESENCE OF LOFBLAD AT THE PS CONSTRUCTION WORKERS MEETING PROVOKED PROTESTS FROM INTERSINDICAL AGAINST "FOREIGN INTERVENTION" IN THE PORTUGUESE LABOR MOVE-  
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PAGE 03 LISBON 08451 081001Z

MENT. INTERSINDICAL ALSO OBJECTED TO THE PRESENCE OF AN INTERNATIONAL TRADE SECRETARIAT OFFICIAL AT A POLITICALLY PARTISAN MEETING. THESE COMPLAINTS FAIL TO CARRY MUCH WEIGHT, HOWEVER, IN VIEW OF INTERSINDICAL'S OWN FREQUENT AND HIGHLY PUBLICIZED CONTACTS WITH COMMUNIST-BLOC ORGANIZATIONS.

5. INTERSINDICAL'S OPPOSITION TO THE REFERENDA PROPOSED

BY THE "OPEN LETTER" UNIONS IS WELL FOUNDED. PRO-  
INTERSINDICAL ACTIVISTS HAVE REPEATEDLY DEMONSTRATED  
THEIR ABILITY TO DOMINATE UNION GENERAL ASSEMBLIES, EVEN  
IN UNIONS WHERE SECRET BALLOT ELECTIONS SHOW LARGE MAJORITIES  
IN FAVOR OF "OPEN LETTER" LEADERSHIPS.  
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## Message Attributes

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